

Florida Rural Economic Development Summit 2025



MEET OUR
SPEAKERS



WORLD
EQUESTRIAN CENTER[®]

World Equestrian Center
Ocala, FL

2025 NOVEMBER
19-21

Meet Our Speakers



J. Scott Angle, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS)

Dr. J. Scott Angle is a national leader in developing the science that supports food production and management of natural resources. As chief executive of the agriculture and environmental sciences arm of a leading land-grant university, he champions public science as a path to improve lives and reduce human suffering.

His accomplished career in government, non-profit international development, and academia informs an approach to leadership based on service, partnership, and drive for impact. An innovator who holds seven patents, Angle has successfully guided multiple organizations through budget shortfalls and other challenges.

Dr. Angle leads nearly 2,300 employees who work in all 67 Florida counties. UF/IFAS encompasses the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, and the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. He also served as the University of Florida's provost for 14 months.

Angle took the helm at UF/IFAS in July 2020, fresh from his position at the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). As director of NIFA appointed by President Trump, he led federal support for the science underpinning the success of American agriculture, frequently partnering with land-grant universities.

Prior to his national service, he led the non-profit International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), where he oversaw a staff of more than 800 and coordinated development projects worldwide. From 2005 to 2015, he served as dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at the University of Georgia.

Angle worked as professor of soil science at the University of Maryland and later as director of the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station and Maryland Cooperative Extension. He is widely cited for his scholarship on phytoremediation, the use of plants for extraction of heavy metals from soil.

Angle received his B.S. in agronomy and M.S. in soil science at the University of Maryland. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri with an emphasis on soil microbiology. He is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and an inductee in the Academy of Science, Engineering & Medicine of Florida.



Nancy Blum-Heintz

Managing Director, VisionFirst Advisors

Nancy Blum-Heintz, has more than 25 years of experience in economic development, communications, education policy and public affairs. She brings a unique ability to translate complex challenges into implementable strategies grounded in data, best practices and a deep understanding of place.

At VisionFirst Advisors, she directs client engagements that align workforce, education, communications and economic priorities—delivering measurable results while helping communities tell their story with clarity and purpose. Nancy also manages the Aerospace Alliance, a state partnership that promotes the Southeast U.S. as a world-class aerospace region and supports industry growth and collaboration across state lines.

In 2022, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) selected VisionFirst Advisors to help develop and implement Workforce Invest, a new grant program aimed at addressing critical workforce development needs across the region. Nancy led the creation of the program framework and now works closely with TVA staff to oversee implementation and grant awards, ensuring investments align with regional workforce priorities and long-term talent strategies.

She also designed a comprehensive marketing and messaging strategy for Florida's Great Northwest to promote Triumph Gulf Coast, a \$1.5 billion economic development fund focused on transforming the regional economy. Her work elevated the region's competitiveness among business decision makers and site selectors.

Most recently, Nancy guided VisionFirst's work on the Ardmore 2025 Economic Vision Plan, partnering with the Ardmore Development Authority, Chamber and Tourism Authority to lead the city's visioning process, stakeholder engagement and strategy development. The result: a strategic roadmap turning disruption—specifically the pending loss of nearly 1,400 Michelin jobs—into a diverse growth agenda centered on entrepreneurship, tourism, downtown revitalization and non-traditional business recruitment.

Meet Our Speakers



Cathy Chambers

Senior Director, Economic Development, Florida Power & Light Company

Cathy leads and advances FPL's economic development strategy statewide and establishes partnerships nationwide. The economic development team's successes have led to repeated recognition by Site Selection in its Top Utility in Economic Development category, as a Top Utility by Business Facilities, and as one of The Best Utilities in Economic Development by Southern Business & Development.

Cathy and her team enhance and support economic development efforts throughout Florida with incentive rates for growing businesses, capacity-building community programs, and resources to local and regional economic development organizations. The team supports business development projects throughout the state within Florida's targeted industry sectors.

Prior to joining FPL in 2019, Cathy worked for more than 20 years in regional economic development in both Ohio and Florida. She has been named one of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers by Consultant Connect and recognized as the 2018 Florida Economic Development Professional of the Year by the Florida Economic Development Council. She is also a graduate of Leadership Florida.

Cathy holds a bachelor's degree in public administration from Miami University (OH) and a master's degree in business administration from Xavier University. She is certified as an Economic Development Finance Professional by the National Development Council and serves on the board of directors for the Utility Economic Development Association and Aerospace Alliance. She is also a member of the International Economic Development Council, Southern Economic Development Council, Florida Economic Development Council and Industrial Asset Management Council.



Beth Cicchetti, CEcD, MEDP

Executive Director, Florida Economic Development Council

Beth Cicchetti is the Executive Director of the Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC), Florida's leading organization for advancing statewide prosperity by professionalizing our field, strengthening our competitiveness, and serving as the number one source of economic development expertise. Beth is responsible for fulfilling the board's mission to serve as the Florida economic development community's primary resource for peer connection, professional development, and advocacy.

A certified economic developer (CEcD) since 2009 accredited by the International Economic Development Council, Beth has a 36-year career in business, economic and workforce development and is the owner of Beth Kirkland Consulting LLC. Elevating her leadership impact, Beth helps communities prepare product to attract and grow private sector investment to diversify Florida's economy.

Specializing in ready sites and community growth strategies, she has helped communities announce new jobs and capital investment in the sectors of IT, Healthcare, Energy, Advanced Materials, Warehousing/Distribution, Transportation Solutions, Backoffice, and Manufacturing. These jobs have occurred in rural and urban markets, at airports, and as greenfield and expansion projects.

Beth graduated from the University of Louisiana-Monroe with a B.S. in Computer Science and the University of Central Florida with a M.S. in Engineering Systems Analysis. She also earned the Master Economic Development Practitioner (MEDP) credential from the Advanced Economic Development Leadership (AEDL) program, a consortium of higher education including the University of New Mexico, Texas Christian University, and the University of Southern Mississippi.

Beth has led numerous Boards of Directors and Committees. She is a Past Chair of CareerSource Capital Region, The Tallahassee Ballet, and served as a director with the National Association of Workforce Boards. She is a 2020 member of Class V of the Florida TaxWatch Citizenship Institute focused on government operations, regulation, permitting, budget, and taxation and a member of Leadership Tallahassee Class 17.

Residing in Tallahassee, Beth and her husband, Mark, proudly support Tallahassee State College through the President's Circle, the Florida State Seminoles, and the Tallahassee Ballet.

Meet Our Speakers



Jennifer Conoley **President & CEO, Florida's Great Northwest**

After her non-profit public relations career morphed into the economic development profession, Jennifer Conoley has been promoting Northwest Florida for growth and diversification, attracting quality companies, and fostering new job creation since 2009.

In March 2020, Conoley became the leader of Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW), the regional economic development organization for the 13-county region of Florida's panhandle. FGNW, along with its investors, are a unified voice promoting, advocating, and collaborating for Northwest Florida's business competitiveness. Under Conoley's leadership, FGNW has spearheaded key initiatives for Northwest Florida, including:

- The attraction of Probes Unlimited Inc., a manufacturer of customer temperature OEM sensing devices, to the rural community of Bonifay (Holmes County), adding 60 quality jobs to the area.
- The attraction of Central Moloney Inc., an electrical distribution transformer manufacturer, at two locations in Northwest Florida (Bay County and Okaloosa County), creating 550 quality jobs with a \$75 million capital investment.
- The creation and launch of Leadership Northwest Florida, an educational program focused on regional collaboration through community, content, and connection.
- Elevated the impressions of Northwest Florida's industry diversity to site selectors and company executives through a new, signature 'Beyond Our Beaches' brand to include an inbound site selectors event, a data-driven revamp of our marketing materials, and a 'Best in Show' award-winning local craft beer gift campaign.
- The launch of Northwest Florida Days during Florida's legislative session.

Before joining FGNW, Conoley was a senior economic development project manager for Gulf Power for seven years. She began her economic development career with the Bay County Economic Development Alliance in Panama City, Fla. in March 2009 serving as project and marketing manager.

Conoley graduated summa cum laude from Florida State University and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication. She is a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) with the International Economic Development Council and a Master Economic Development Practitioner with the Advanced Economic

Development Leadership program offered by Texas Christian University, the University of New Mexico and the University of Southern Mississippi.



Julie Dennis **CEO & Founder, OVID Solutions**

Julie Dennis is the Owner & CEO of OVID Solutions, a consulting firm that helps communities across Florida access and manage federal and state grant funding to bring local projects to life. To date, OVID Solutions has secured over \$1 billion in funding for clients throughout the state. In addition, she serves as one of the Economic Development Coordinators for the Wakulla Economic Development Council.

Before founding OVID in January 2019, Julie served as Florida's top Community Development Official, overseeing critical recovery efforts following Hurricanes Hermine, Matthew, and Irma. She spent years designing and leading a wide variety of state and federal grant programs, giving her deep insight into how to position organizations for success in securing and managing public funding.

With a master's degree in urban and regional planning and a bachelor's degree in political science - Julie has a passion for working with clients to secure funding to make their visions and plans come alive. Her expertise includes affordable housing, economic development, long-term disaster recovery, and community resiliency.

Julie lives in Wakulla County on Shady Hammock Farm with her husband, Tim and a menagerie of animals. She loves spending her free time competing with her dogs and horses.

Meet Our Speakers



Mike Grissom
Principal, Government Relations, Buchanan

Mike's career in the political arena has taken him across thirteen states on both local, state and federal levels. Mike has formed relationships with key decision-makers and business leaders in Florida and around the country. He uses his extensive experience to advocate for his clients and help advance their business interests in Florida, specifically related to economic development issues, including aerospace and aviation, agriculture, advanced manufacturing, information technology, financial services, foreign direct investment, rural infrastructure and corporate relocation.

Mike's prior roles include time in private practice and serving as Executive Vice President of Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI), a public private partnership charged with job creation in the state, where he led legislative and external affairs efforts on behalf of the organization. Mike acted as the point person for communications between EFI and the Executive Office of the Governor, State Legislature, and state agencies including the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Revenue, CareerSource Florida, Florida Department of Transportation, and VisitFlorida.

Mike also served as Executive Director of the Republican Party of Florida and as Senior Director of Political Affairs at the Florida Chamber of Commerce where he was the chief Liaison between the Florida Chamber and the Governor, Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, Agriculture Commissioner, and House and Senate Campaigns. Mike also has worked as political strategist for former Governor Rick Scott and former Attorney General Bill McCollum, and worked with key officials in Kentucky, South Carolina, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Mike resides in Tallahassee, Florida with his wife Kristen and their son Henry. He is an avid sportsman who enjoys hunting, fishing, golf, and exploring Florida's great outdoors.



Sadie Haire
Government Relations Consultant, Becker & Poliakoff

Sadie Haire is a Government Relations Consultant in Becker's Federal Lobbying Practice. A 9th-generation native Floridian from Madison County, Ms. Haire proudly worked in the Florida House of Representatives within the Clerk's Office and as State Representative Jason Fischer's District Aide in Jacksonville, and State Representative Jason Shoaf's District Aide throughout North Florida, leading public relations efforts for state government events and fundraisers and managing all constituent services.

As a Regional Director for the Republican Party of Florida, she oversaw St. Johns, Clay, Flagler, Volusia, Duval, and Nassau Counties. In this role, she met with local officials and community members, led grassroots efforts, and assisted Governor Ron DeSantis' gubernatorial campaign, Congressman Rutherford's re-election and Governor Rick Scott's successful United States Senate campaign.

As a Native American descendant, Ms. Haire specializes in Tribal issues, as well as Grant Research, Rural Communities, Transportation Infrastructure, Public Safety Advocacy, Community Resiliency, Crypto, Municipal Funding, and Water and Energy issues.

Sadie graduated from Florida State University and has served on the Board of Trustees for Florida House on Capitol Hill since 2024.



Ron Hetrick
Principal Economist, Lightcast

Ron was a senior and supervisory economist for 8 years with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington D.C. and had a 20-year stint as an advising economist for the largest staffing company in the U.S.

Quoted by CBS, CNBC, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes and numerous nationally syndicated news channels and magazines on a regular basis, Hetrick has provided analysis for prior Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, The Council of Economic Advisors to the President, Congress, and numerous Fortune 100 companies and trade associations.

Ron was lead author of "The Demographic Drought," co-lead author of "Who Is Going to Do the Work?" and lead author of the recently released update to Demographic Drought, "The Rising Storm." He keynotes at conferences around the country on the current labor situation.

Meet Our Speakers



Marc Hoenstine **Managing Director, Economic Development - Florida**

Marc Hoenstine serves as managing director of economic development for Duke Energy in Florida. In this role, he leads efforts to grow the company's commercial and industrial customer base across Duke Energy's service territory in Florida. Partnering with state, regional and local economic development organizations, he delivers innovative strategies that drive business growth and investment.

Marc has been in this role since 2009. During this time, the program has collaborated with key partners to successfully recruit over 193 projects, resulting in \$4 billion in new capital investment and over 26,000 jobs in the Duke Energy Florida service area. In addition, the team has been recognized annually as a Top Utility Economic Development Program by Site Selection magazine. Over the last several decades, he has built strong productive relationships with site selection consultants, site decision influencers and key allies throughout the industry.

Marc joined Duke Energy in 2001, which makes him a 24-year veteran in the energy industry. Prior to working for Duke Energy Florida, Marc worked at Enterprise Florida as one of the first members of its Business Recruitment team. He was also employed by Enterprise Florida's predecessor, the Florida Department of Commerce.

Marc graduated from Florida State University with a B.A. in international affairs and a minor in German. He is also a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma and a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD).

Marc has served as the chairman of the Florida Economic Development Council Board and was the 2021 recipient of the Eunice Sullivan Economic Development Professional of the Year Award.

A Florida native and lifelong resident, Marc lives in Windermere with his wife, Karen, and their children, Katie and Sam.



J. Alex Kelly **Florida Secretary of Commerce**

J. Alex Kelly currently leads FloridaCommerce as Florida's Secretary of Commerce. Prior to his appointment, Kelly held the Deputy Chief of Staff role in the Governor's Office since April 2021.

Kelly has an extensive background and expertise in education and economic development having served as the Vice President for the Foundation of Excellence in Education and the Chief of Staff to then-Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran in 2019.

In total, Kelly held roles in the Florida House of Representatives on the three occasions and in the Florida Senate, including Staff Director for the Redistricting Committee in the Florida House of Representatives and Chief Analyst for the House's Select Policy Council on Strategic & Economic Planning. He served as the Chief of Staff for the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, and Legislative Affairs Director at the Florida Department of Corrections and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

Kelly earned both a bachelor's degree in political science from York College of Pennsylvania and a master's degree in political science from the University of Florida.



Kaylee King **President, Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation**

Kaylee King is the President of the Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation, where she leads efforts to grow and diversify the local economy. A fourth-generation Okeechobee native, she has helped recruit several new businesses to the area and created the Okeechobee Junior Leaders program to build workforce awareness and leadership skills among youth. Kaylee was named a "Leader to Watch" by Treasure Coast Business Magazine and has a background in healthcare marketing. She is an alumna of Indian River State College, a UCF knight, and is a proud wife and mom to two daughters.

Meet Our Speakers



Christopher Lloyd

Director, Infrastructure & Economic Development, McGuireWoods Consulting

Chris Lloyd leads McGuireWoods Consulting's infrastructure and economic development team where he specializes in site selection and economic development incentives negotiations. Since 1998, Chris has worked on dozens of high profile, corporate expansions and relocations across the country. Chris has also worked closely with clients on numerous public-private partnership projects for transportation and other infrastructure, and played a leading role in the development and passage of Virginia's public-private partnership laws, which have since become model legislation for use in other states.

Prior to joining McGuireWoods Consulting, Chris served for nearly five years in the Office of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade under Virginia Governors Allen and Wilder. In this position, he was responsible for legislative, budgetary, and regulatory coordination and development within that Secretariat which managed the state's economic development programs.

Chris graduated from the College of William & Mary in 1993. He lives in Richmond with his wife, Megan, and children.



Darrick D. McGhee

President & CEO of Strategic Inflection Point, LLC

Darrick D. McGhee, Sr. is an anomaly. He is known as a highly skilled, well trained, and motivated leader. A professional with extensive experience in public service, and a strong background in legislative initiatives on a state level.

As a business consultant, he is the President & CEO of Strategic Inflection Point, LLC., which is a full-service professional development company offering Executive Coaching, Public Speaking, Leadership Development, and Public Policy Lobbying

He is a government consultant, currently serving as Chief Operating Officer for Johnson & Blanton, LLC. He has nearly 25 years of experience in state government and politics. Prior to his current role, he was the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Executive Office of Governor Rick Scott. In this capacity, he was responsible for advocating and securing passage of the Governor's legislative priorities. He ensured the proper and legal administration of the Governor's legislative role throughout the legislative process and provided counsel and support to the Governor and other staff members regarding legislative and executive issues. In this role, Darrick also oversaw the Legislative Affairs Directors for each of the executive agencies.

Before joining the Executive Office of Governor Rick Scott, he served in multiple senior leadership roles with the Department of Economic Opportunity. While at this agency, he was the interim Executive Director, Chief of Staff, and the Director of Legislative and Cabinet Affairs. He also served as Legislative Affairs Director for three additional state agencies: The Departments of Education, Business and Professional Regulation, and Elder Affairs respectively. These roles spanned over three gubernatorial Administrations: Governors Rick Scott, Charlie Crist, and Jeb Bush.

He is a Pastor with 26 years of ministry experience. He is a writer, a podcaster, a husband, a father, a proud FAMU graduate, one who is community involved. A Florida native and lifelong resident, Marc lives in Windermere with his wife, Karen, and their children, Katie and Sam.

Meet Our Speakers



Michael McWaters **CEO, Suwannee Electric Cooperative**

Michael (Mike) McWaters has spent over twenty-eight years as part of the electric cooperative network including the last 19 years as a CEO. Mike served in various capacities at Cherokee Electric Cooperative and Cullman Electric Cooperative before being named CEO at Wiregrass Electric Cooperative in 2005. In 2014, Mike accepted the CEO position at Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative in Live Oak, FL and was named Chairperson of the Board of Managers for Rapid Fiber Internet, LLC in 2022.

Under Mike's leadership, cooperatives have won many state, regional and national awards including the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's PEARL award for community development and Community Service Award for energy efficiency.

McWaters has volunteered his time and held leadership positions with chambers of commerce, college foundations, United Way groups, churches and in Rotary where he is a Paul Harris Fellow. He holds a BS in Business Administration from Troy University and a Master of Public Administration from Jacksonville State University. McWaters has been married to his high school sweetheart, Kristy, for 33 years and they have three children.



Shellie Phelps **Creative Consultant, Biggest Fish Consulting**

Shellie is an inspirational national public speaker and cheerleader for small towns. As a consultant, she focuses on building diverse, creative dream teams who can collaborate across organizational and city limit lines. Incorporating the arts to tell a community's unique story is at the heart of every one of her team-building missions, helping to breathe new life into small towns across the US.

She is an award-winning artist, seasoned art educator, and former Chamber Director in Wetumpka, Alabama. Over the past five years, she has had the distinct privilege of working with communities featured on HGTV's hit show, Home Town Takeover. Shellie has three grown children and currently lives in Slapout, Alabama, where she recently completed her first book.



Darryl Register **Director of Economic Development, North Florida Professional Services**

After 25 years as a local business owner and 18 years as a local economic development professional, Darryl is now the Director of Economic Development with North Florida Professional Services. In this role Darryl supports the economic development activities of several local communities.

In addition to several local boards, Darryl also serves as a deacon in his church and as a representative of Baker County on the boards of the Northeast Florida Regional Council where he currently serves as Treasurer, the North Florida Economic Development Partnership where he is a past Chairmen, the Florida Rural Economic Development Association where he is the current Chairman, and CareerSource Northeast Florida where he is a past Chairman.

Darryl and his wife of 43 years, Danette, have two children and four grandchildren. In his spare time Darryl enjoys helping on the family farm and spending time with his family.

Meet Our Speakers



Matt Swanson **Interim President, SelectFlorida**

Dr. Matt Swanson is the Chief Operating Officer for the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) and Interim President and CEO of SelectFlorida, Florida's international commerce agency.

Matt proudly supports Florida's economy, communities, and workforce by prioritizing effective operational collaboration that empowers the agency's employees and countless Floridians to flourish. Overseeing the department's resources, Matt provides strategic direction and operational leadership, fostering a culture of innovation and learning, to drive initiatives that enhance operational agility. Matt thrives on reimagining possibilities and is driven by conquering complex challenges to achieve results.

Moreover, Matt serves as Vice President and Treasurer of the Florida Opportunity Fund, Florida's venture capital organization. Throughout his leadership roles, he successfully reinforces Florida's economic development goals, promotes business development and advancement, and ensures strategic alignment among programs.

Prior to his appointment as COO, Matt served as Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Enterprise Florida, Inc. and supported the implementation of HB5, which streamlined Florida's economic development programs. Holding a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management, a Master of Business Administration, and a Doctor of Business Administration, Matt has also previously held key leadership positions in the higher education sector including Vice President of Finance and Business Operations for Jacksonville University and Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer for Fletcher Technical Community College.



Gray Swoope **President & CEO of VisionFirst Advisors**

A recognized leader in economic development, Gray Swoope is President and Chief Executive Officer of VisionFirst Advisors. After a successful 30-year career in economic development, Gray launched VisionFirst in 2015, with offices in Tallahassee, Orlando, Jackson, Greenville, Chicago, and Dallas. The firm has established a highly successful customer base founded on trust, results and continued engagement.

VisionFirst's portfolio of client work, spanning all 50 states, involves economic development strategy, marketing/communications, workforce strategy, site selection and incentives negotiations and compliance. The firm's clients include 29 Fortune 500 companies and represent a variety of industries including information technology, bio pharmaceutical, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and logistics/distribution. Gray has a track record for promoting collaborative solutions and building highly effective teams that deliver successful results.

Prior to starting VisionFirst, Gray served as Florida's Secretary of Commerce and President of Enterprise Florida, the state's public/private economic development organization, during then Rick Scott administration from 2011-2015. Before joining Governor Scott, Gray served as the Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) under then Governor Haley Barbour. During his tenure at MDA, Gray not only played a vital role in recruiting world renown companies to Mississippi but also provided leadership in economic development recovery following Hurricane Katrina.

Gray is passionate about economic development, having served at all levels representing both urban and rural regions. A constant student of the profession who never stops the pursuit of learning, Gray successfully wields his knowledge to meet the goals of his clients in today's fast-paced economy. Gray earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi State University.

Meet Our Speakers



Chris Wimsatt

Advisor, Corporate Real Estate, Energy, Economic Development, Location Design Group

With more than 20 years of leadership experience in economic development and real estate, Chris Wimsatt has guided hundreds of companies, communities, and organizations in making strategic investment decisions that have generated significant jobs and capital investment. He currently serves as Director of Corporate Site Selection for Location Design Group, a subsidiary of ATK Energy Group, where he helps corporate clients evaluate, expand, and relocate operations with confidence.

Chris brings a unique perspective shaped by leadership roles across both the public and private sectors. Prior to joining LDG, he served as Vice President of Business Development and Site Readiness at Florida Commerce, where he focused on business recruitment, retention, marketing, and site development. His background also includes experience with a national utility, regional and local economic development organizations, and chambers of commerce. This cross-sector expertise allows him to deliver data-driven insights on workforce, real estate, incentives, and infrastructure that directly support client decision-making.

Recognized as one of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers by Consultant Connect, Chris holds professional designations as a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD), Development Finance Certified Professional (DFCP) and is a licensed Florida real estate professional. He earned his undergraduate degree from The Ohio State University and a Master's in Community and Economic Development from Penn State University. Outside of his professional work, Chris serves on several industry and community boards and enjoys time with his wife, two children and three dogs.